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The Dialectics of Marxism and Neo-Freudianism: Ideological Dogmatism and the Limits of Criticism in Socialist Albania¹

Abstract: *This article analyses the book *Neofrojdizmi: filozofi e njeriut të tjetërsuar* [Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human] (1989) by Artan Fuga, in which Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism are criticized from the standpoint of Orthodox Marxism. By situating Fuga's book in the political and ideological context of 1989 and comparing it to an earlier work by Viktor Riska and Marianthi Zoto (*Neo-Freudianism: One of the Theoretical Bases of Bourgeois Liberalism*, 1974), the article investigates whether there was any ideological evolution between generations of Albanian philosophers. The analysis shows that, despite the softer political climate of the late 1980s, Marxist dogmatism continued to shape the treatment of Freudian and Neo-Freudian ideas. Ultimately, the article argues that the rigid ideological framework of Albanian Marxism-Leninism left little room for theoretical synthesis or critical engagement with alternative schools of thought, including psychoanalysis. This contributes to a broader understanding of philosophy, political thought, and ideological continuity in socialist Albania.*

Keywords: *psychoanalysis; Marxism-Leninism; ideology; intellectual history.*

Introduction

This article examines a work written in 1989, on the eve of the fall of Albania's socialist regime, on the topic of Neo-Freudianism, *Neofrojdizmi: filozofi e njeriut të tjetërsuar* [Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human] by Artan Fuga (Fuga, 1989). Fuga is currently one of the most renowned Albanian philosophers, known

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both domestically and internationally, with a long academic career as a lecturer and researcher in philosophy and communication sciences at the University of Tirana and in Paris. This article, however, does not seek to provide a general account of his philosophical thought. Rather, it focuses on a work in which he critiques Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism from the perspective of Orthodox Marxism.

This study continues a previous work by the author that examined the official position of the Albanian political leadership regarding Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism (Brisku, 2024). It is worth noting here that, while psychologists in the so-called West generally regarded Freudianism/psychoanalysis as a method of treatment in clinical psychology (American Psychological Association, 2023) and Neo-Freudianism as an approach derived from Freud's psychoanalysis that emphasized social and cultural over biological factors (APA, 2018), in socialist Albania, Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism were considered "currents within bourgeois idealist philosophy and psychology," (Universiteti i Tiranës, Fakulteti i Shkencave Politike dhe Juridike, 1981: 146).

This perspective is evident in the discourse of the Albanian political leadership, in official philosophical texts of the time, and in the writings of Artan Fuga.

My aim, therefore, is to analyse and critique Artan Fuga's criticism of Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism. Although the title suggests a focus on Neo-Freudianism, Fuga begins with Sigmund Freud and continues with authors he categorizes as Neo-Freudians – such as Carl Jung, Erich Fromm, and, to a lesser extent, Herbert Marcuse, Gilles Deleuze, Alfred Adler, Melanie Klein, and Karen Horney (Fuga, 1989: 3-5). The main reasons for the greater focus on Jung and Fromm likely include, first, their broader popularity, including within Albania, and second, the fact that, alongside Freud, they had been criticized by the Albanian political leadership. Fuga's book was written on the eve of the regime's collapse in 1989, a period when the Albanian state-socialist regime was no longer at the height of its violence and repression (Fischer & Schmitt, 2022: 167). Furthermore, in the spheres of education, arts, and culture, the regime had begun implementing a policy of tolerance. Yet, in official ideological discourse, Albania never abandoned its claim to uphold the Orthodox Marxist-Leninist line. So, in addition to analysing and critiquing of Fuga's treatment of Freud and the Neo-Freudians, this article also offers a comparative overview of his work in relation to that of Viktor Riska and Marianthi Zoto. Their earlier study, *Neo-Frojdianizmi – Një nga bazat teorike të liberalizmit*

borgjez [Neo-Freudianism: One of the Theoretical Bases of Bourgeois Liberalism] (Riska & Zoto, 1974) was examined in detail in my previous article (Brisku, 2024). The purpose of this comparison is to determine whether, over the span of fifteen years, there was any evolution in the official political stance or in Albanian philosophical thought regarding Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism, particularly across different generations of philosophers.

In this way, the article seeks to contribute to the study of the history of philosophy, political thought, and ideology in socialist Albania. By examining Artan Fuga's critique of Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism, it aims to highlight the dogmatism and rigidity of Marxist thought in Albania, which precluded meaningful engagement with other philosophical currents. Moreover, by situating Fuga's book – published in 1989, on the threshold of the regime's collapse – alongside the earlier work written during the most repressive years of the system, this study also contributes to the political history of Albania, shedding light on the (lack of) change in ideological discourse during the state socialist period.

The Dialectical Relationship Between Marxism and Psychoanalysis

It is worth noting that neither the Albanian authors nor the country's political leadership were the first to criticize Sigmund Freud from the perspective of Dialectical and Historical Materialism. The critique of Freudian theories from a materialist, Marxist perspective was first developed by one of Freud's contemporaries, the Soviet linguist Valentin Voloshinov (1895–1936). As a linguist, Voloshinov placed great importance on the study of language, which he regarded as an ideological instrument. In his view, understanding human psychology requires the study of language and verbal communication, since language, being ideological in nature, shapes both human thought and psychology (Voloshilov, 2012 [1927]: 60).

For Voloshinov, Freud's principle flaw was his emphasis on the "sexual drive" as the primary impulse behind social and political phenomena. This, he argued, reflected Freud's unfamiliarity with contemporary psychology and his reliance on an unscientific method. Freud based his work largely on observation and empiricism, which led to erroneous conclusions. As a Marxist, Voloshinov stressed the important

role of external factors in - particularly language as an ideological instrument - in shaping human thought and psychology (Voloshilov, 2012 [1927]: 87-90).

Another critique of Freudianism came from the Soviet psychiatrist Dmitry Fedotov (1908–1982), who wrote in 1959 that Freudianism was not a psychological theory but rather a manifestation of idealist philosophy within psychology. Fedotov argued that it sought to formulate laws explaining the evolution of human society based on this idealist framework. For him, the most telling sign of Freudian idealism was its claim that unconscious sexual instincts are the fundamental drivers of human and social behaviour (Fedotov, 1959: 35-38).

As noted, Albanian authors had addressed the critique of Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism well before Artan Fuga's book. Viktor Riska and Marianthi Zoto put forward a critique similar to Fedotov's, describing Freudianism as a reflection of idealist philosophy within psychology that explains human behaviour, both individual and social, on the basis of innate sexual instincts, thereby making it a reactionary approach. In their view, despite its ostensibly critical stance towards Marxism, Neo-Freudianism in fact retained its core premise by treating sexual instincts as the primary driver of human behaviour. As such, it sought to explain the problems of capitalist societies not by addressing their economic roots but by focusing on the human psyche, which, they argued, rendered this philosophy equally reactionary (Riska & Zoto, 1974).

An important feature of Riska and Zoto's work, which is also reiterated in Artan Fuga's book, pertains to their explanation for engaging with Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism. This interest can be traced, first, to the spread of Neo-Freudian theories in capitalist and revisionist countries, which could also influence Albanian society; and second, to the role Neo-Freudianism had assumed globally in philosophy, the arts, and culture where, as already noted, it serves to justify the problems caused by capitalism. Furthermore, given Albania's self-proclaimed role as a defender of Marxism-Leninism, Albanian authors saw it as their duty to produce a Marxist critique of any ideology or philosophical current they deemed bourgeois and revisionist (Ibid., 3-4).

As mentioned, beyond Freud's theories, Fuga's book focuses more heavily on authors he considers to be Freud's followers, labelling them as Neo-Freudians. Most of his attention is devoted to two authors he considers the most significant: Carl Jung and Erich Fromm.

Carl Jung emphasized the exploration of the unconscious mind and the role of symbols, archetypes, and individuation in understanding human psychology. He believed that the unconscious mind contains not only personal experiences but also collective and ancestral memories that shape an individual's behaviour and personality. Jung was highly sceptical of Marxism and never engaged with Marx as a thinker. While both Marx and Jung sought to uncover invisible layers of reality and were ultimately concerned with human flourishing and forms of healing, their approaches could not be more different. Marx's politico-economic project was mainly concerned with the material conditions of human existence, whereas Jung's psychology focused on the subjective and unconscious dimensions of human experience. Marx emphasized the importance of collective action and the struggle against exploitation and oppression, while Jung stressed individual self-discovery and the integration of the unconscious (Gerber, 2021: 3-5).

Unlike Jung, Erich Fromm attempted to reconcile the theories of Freud and Marx (Cheliotis, 2011: 439). Fromm believed that Freud's psychoanalytic theory could help explain the psychological effects of capitalism, while Marx's historical materialism could account for its economic and social effects. Fromm argued that capitalism creates a society in which people are alienated from themselves, from each other, and from nature – an alienation that leads to psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, and narcissism. Fromm also contended that ruling elites in capitalist societies use their power to legitimize their position and maintain their own sense of self-worth, rather than to serve the interests of the masses they govern (Fromm, 1970: 60-82).

While Soviet psychiatrists such as Dmitry Fedotov dismissed psychoanalysis as a therapeutic approach, the broader landscape of psychoanalytic practice and attitudes toward Freud in socialist states during the second half of the twentieth century was far more complex. As Dagmar Herzog has shown, psychoanalysis evolved and was reinterpreted in both East and the West throughout the Cold War, shaped by the traumas of the Second World War and by differing political and cultural contexts. In the West, psychoanalytic discourse was often employed to critique or interpret the political dynamics of the socialist bloc, while in socialist countries – even when marginalized or officially repressed – psychoanalysis continued to play an influential role, particularly among cultural and intellectual elites (Herzog, 2017).

In this regard, the Yugoslav case stands out as distinctive. Due to the comparatively greater openness of the Yugoslav socialist regime –

especially in terms of scientific and cultural exchange with both blocs – psychoanalysis experienced a more sustained development. As Ana Antić writes, Yugoslav psychiatry and psychoanalysis were not only tolerated but also integrated into broader state strategies, including efforts to extend influence within the so-called Third World (Antić, 2021). This shows the variability of socialist engagements with psychoanalysis and contrasts with the more repressive model seen initially in the Soviet Union and later in Albania.

The Development of Psychiatry and the Marginalization of Psychotherapy in Socialist Albania

In Albania psychoanalysis was primarily regarded as a philosophy of bourgeois idealism rather than as a psychotherapeutic treatment. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that in the introduction to his book, when discussing Freudianism and psychoanalysis, Artan Fuga writes that in its early stages as a psychiatric method, psychoanalysis had achieved some positive results in treating certain mental disorders and had led to improvements in patients treated by Sigmund Freud (Fuga, 1989: 5-6).

However, psychoanalysis was not officially permitted to be practiced in Albania, even though it is likely that most people at the time would not have sought out psychoanalytic treatment – something attributable less to the socialist regime than to the stigma surrendering mental illnesses in Albanian society. In fact, the origins of psychiatry in Albania are linked to the socialist period, as before this, psychiatric treatments were virtually unknown in the country (Vehbiu, 2023).

Despite having a broader legacy in (bio)medicine – dating back to the Ottoman period and especially the monarchy – psychiatry remained almost entirely unfamiliar in Albania (Hoxha, 1962). Until the socialist period, mental illnesses were mostly treated by so-called “local healers,” which included Orthodox and Catholic priests who performed exorcisms, Muslim imams and dervishes who recited ruqyah (spiritual healing prayers), and other folk practices such as charms or chants intended to ward off evil spirits or the “evil eye.”

The first steps toward the institutional treatment of mental illness in Albania occurred during the socialist period, led by a generation of psychiatrists educated in the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries. In the early years, due in part to the underdevelopment of psychotherapy worldwide at the time, treatments for psychiatric patients primarily involved electroshock therapy, cold-water baths, and insulin shock ther-

apy. However, it is important to note that by the 1950s, Albanian psychiatrists trained in Moscow and elsewhere had introduced the widespread use of pharmacological drugs for the treatment of mental illness (Vehbiu, 2023).

Ulvi Vehbiu (1931-2010), a pioneer of Albanian psychiatry, played a key role in this development by introducing new medications for the treatment of schizophrenia, depression, and neuroses – ranging from chlorpromazine and haloperidol to tricyclic antidepressants, lithium, and benzodiazepines – as well as initiating the practice of psychotherapy. This represented a genuine revolution in the treatment of mental illness in the country. First, it improved the conditions and quality of care in psychiatric hospitals, and second, it made it possible for many patients – after a period of treatment and continued medication – to return to their families and lead “normal” lives. This not only reduced the burden on families but also helped mitigate the social stigma associated with mental illness (Ibid.).

In addition to revolutionizing pharmacological treatment, Dr. Vehbiu also worked to introduce psychotherapy in Albania. In the early 1970s he specialized in psychotherapy in France, training in Schultz’s method of autogenic therapy. Upon returning to Tirana, he established a psychotherapy cabinet where he began treating patients using this method. It is likely that his dispatch to France for psychotherapy training, as well as the official approval to open a psychotherapy cabinet, were made possible by the relatively more open cultural and scientific atmosphere in Albania during the 1970s (Brisku, 2024).

However, in 1974, following the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour, Dr. Vehbiu was sharply criticized for allegedly incorporating bourgeois ideological influences into psychiatry. Psychotherapy was deemed to be tainted by Freudianism, even though Schultz’s autogenic training was not psychoanalysis. Nevertheless, the psychotherapy cabinet was shut down, and patients could be treated only with medication. Despite the official prohibition, in some exceptional cases he continued to treat select patients with psychotherapy in his private home – particularly those more likely to benefit from such treatment than from pharmacological interventions (Vehbiu, 2023).

Ideological Orthodoxy and Political Discourse in Socialist Albania

The state socialist regime in Albania (1945-1991), both in the international reputation and in much of the scholarship on socialist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe and beyond, has consistently been regarded as highly repressive – severe in its punishment of opponents and, most importantly, highly dogmatic and rigid in its interpretation of Marxism-Leninism (Meksi, 2015).

However, a closer examination reveals that the forty-five years of state socialism in Albania were not marked by unbroken rigidity. Rather, there were distinct phases in which the regime's strictness eased, particularly in the cultural and social spheres, allowing for limited forms of openness. For instance, after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, although Albania neither pursued de-Stalinization nor changed its political leadership, certain repressive elements of the regime were relaxed. (Mëhilli, 2011) A similar softening occurred in the early 1960s following Albania's break with the Soviet Union, when the regime sought to build broader popular support for its new political direction. (Meksi, 2015)

The mid-1960s to the 1970s, however, represented a period of deep contradictions. On one hand, influenced by China's Cultural Proletarian Revolution, Albania witnessed a heightened extension of collective control over the individual, orchestrated by the central authorities. This process culminated in the 1970s with measures such as the educational reforms of the 1960s, the proliferation of *fletërrufe* (public denunciation posters), youth mobilizations, and the 1967 campaign that forcefully abolished religious practices (Mëhilli, 2017). On the other hand, the regime also made certain concessions. Italian television broadcasts were permitted in parts of the country, and there was increased exposure to Western scientific and artistic literature. Between 1969 and 1972, Enver Hoxha himself encouraged a more open atmosphere and greater freedom for the youth (Lubonja, 2010).

This relative openness came to an abrupt end in 1973. The following decade, lasting until 1983, marked one of the harshest periods of the Albanian socialist regime. It was characterized by a series of purges targeting supposed "hostile elements" in various sectors, including the arts and culture, the military, the economy, the oil industry, and ultimately even the Ministry of the Interior.

In April 1985, Albania's leader of forty years, Enver Hoxha, passed away and was succeeded by a significantly younger figure,

Ramiz Alia, the former Secretary for Ideological Affairs and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania. Although at the 9th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania (November 1986), Alia affirmed the continuation of Hoxha's policies, the prevailing public perception in Albania is that the regime's repressive policies weakened during the 1985-1991 period, leading to a liberalization of everyday social and cultural life (Fischer & Schmitt, 2022: 270).

Nevertheless, despite moments of relaxation in the regime's repression or improvements in daily life, the official discourse of the Albanian political leadership remained committed to defending the "ideological purity" of Marxism-Leninism (Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Sektori i Enciklopedisë, 1985: 927). As part of this "battle," the Central Committee apparatus, the Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies, and the Faculty of Political and Juridical Sciences produced articles and studies on both domestic and international matters, criticizing so-called philosophical currents and bourgeois and revisionist ideologies, including Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism (Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Sektori i Enciklopedisë, 1985: 825). Such critiques intensified at crucial moments in the Albanian history, such as the breakdown of relations with the Soviet Union, the initial rift with China, and after the 4th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania (in 1973), when "liberal views" in art and culture were condemned (Isufi, 2020: 76). Yet, these critiques continued throughout the regime's existence, including the late 1980s, when Artan Fuga's book (1989) was published.

Importantly, the official ideological ban on Freud and other authors did not mean that their works were entirely absent or unread in Albania. In fact, one of the reasons such critical texts were written was precisely their popularity among the general population – especially among students – who read them in French, Italian, and English. Some works were even translated into Albanian and published by *Rilindja* in Kosovo, which, as part of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, enjoyed greater cultural freedom during the 1970s to translate and publish works that were officially banned in Albania.

Artan Fuga (1954) belonged to the second generation of philosophy scholars in socialist Albania, graduating in 1978 from the Faculty of Political and Juridical Sciences with a specialization in philosophy. From 1981 onward, he lectured at the same faculty. Unlike the previous generation, educated largely in the Soviet Union, this later cohort was trained primarily in Albania, but maintained closer connections to

mainstream Western philosophical currents through increased cultural exchanges with Western countries, particularly France and Italy. This is evident in the works he cited in *Neofrojdzimi: filozofi e njeriut të tjetërsuar* [Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human], which were primarily French publications contemporary with his own. In addition to this book, which critiques Neo-Freudianism, Fuga published other works on bourgeois ideology, including *Filozofët e rinj, shërbëtorë të bindur të kapitalit* [The New Philosophers, Obedient Servants of Capital] (1982), *Ekzistencializmi i Sartrit, filozofi e reaksionit imperialist* [Sartre's Existentialism, Philosophy of Imperialist Reaction] (1986), and a general textbook, *Kritika e filozofisë borgjeze* [Critique of Bourgeois Philosophy] (co-authored with Kristaq Angjeli, 1988).

For a broader public – particularly those unable to read foreign languages or without access to restricted books – such ‘critiques of bourgeois philosophy’ were often the only available window into the thought of these authors. Though saturated with ideological language such as “bourgeois,” “idealist,” and “reactionary,” these texts nevertheless offered a general introduction to their ideas, thereby making them accessible to the wider Albanian public, which otherwise would have had no access even to the basic tenets of their thought.

***Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human,* by Artan Fuga**

The book's introduction explicitly states its aim as providing a Marxist-Leninist critique of Neo-Freudian philosophy within the framework of the Party of Labour of Albania. It focuses primarily on Neo-Freudianism's treatment of the human subject, identifying this as the clearest expression of the philosophy's “reactionary, idealist, and anti-scientific” character. (Fuga, 1989: 3).

Although the book concentrates on Neo-Freudianism, it addresses Freud himself in its first chapter, focusing on the “reactionary and anti-scientific bases” of his philosophy. Critically examining Freud's philosophy, Fuga asserts that individual liberty cannot be achieved in society's absence” in contrast, he emphasized the Marxist-Leninist idea of society's continuous progress and its path toward true freedom, which can only be realized under socialism (Ibid., 26).

“...Human freedom can only be attained in society, as it is through society that tools of labour can be perfected, human reason developed,

and consequently, humans can subjugate nature for their needs and self-improvement,” (Ibid., 28).

According to Fuga, the emphasis on biological instincts, particularly sexual ones, as determinants of the Albanian worldview and human behaviour leads to the theoretical justification of the flaws of capitalist society. Militarism, aggressiveness, imperialist politics, violence and repression, as well as political and national oppression, are seen by Freud as detached from their “class nature,” and instead as manifestation of human nature itself, driven by instincts (Ibid., 18).

Fuga acknowledges that, as a medical treatment method, psychoanalysis has achieved results in curing patients in clinical settings. However, he does not intend to address the validity of psychoanalysis as therapy for mental disorders. To him, the main issue with Freudianism arises when attempts are made to apply clinical data to society. In attributing individual psychological phenomena to society as a whole, and depicting social development as a struggle between instincts and morality, Freudianism becomes an idealist philosophy. It is here, Fuga argues, that its reactionary essence lies – serving to justify the dominance of ruling classes (Ibid., 21).

Even as a clinical method, however, Fuga identifies a problem in Freud’s explanation of psychological issues as rooted in internal spiritual traumas, especially the repression of instincts, and in particular sexual ones. From a materialist perspective, this approach denies two significant aspects that are considered crucial to the origins of psychological problems: first, biological causes; and second, socio-economic conditions. While the denial of the first cause is, according to Fuga, scientifically flawed, the denial of the second is deliberate, aiming to justify the injustices of capitalism, which produce mental illness in oppressed classes, but are reframed by Freud solely as the result of individual internal trauma (Ibid., 22).

This explains the ban on psychoanalysis as a medical treatment in socialist Albania: even as therapy, it was influenced by idealist philosophy, locating the causes of mental disorders as in the unconscious, instincts, and human nature, rather than in the biological processes of the brain and the external material conditions affecting mental health.

The remainder of the book focuses on a critique of Carl Jung and Erich Fromm whom Fuga regards as the founders of Neo-Freudianism.

According to Fuga, Carl Jung marks the onset of the Neo-Freudian school, representing an evolution from Freudian philosophy. Following the 1940s, Freud’s theories, in Fuga’s view, required reform and

could no longer be sustained in their original form. Jung's efforts, whether in the Zurich School of Psychoanalysis or the International Psychoanalytical Association, were aimed at undermining Marxism-Leninism and quelling revolutionary aspirations among the masses (Ibid., 35).

Despite Jung's modifications to Freudian theories, Fuga contends that Jung remains a worthy successor because he doesn't contradict their essence. According to Fuga, the core of these theories is that human life is governed by irrationality, which has shaped historical events, social processes, and mass movements throughout history. However, Fuga argues that a proper Marxist-Leninist critique of Neo-Freudianism requires noting the distinctions between Freud and his followers – in this case, Jung. For instance, Jung expands Freud's concept of the unconscious to include the spiritual world of the primordial human, which he calls the "archetype" (Ibid., 38). Moreover, Jung transcends Freud's opposition between biology and society, reframing it as a conflict between the spiritual world of antiquity (the archetype) and modern civilization.

"...Unlike Freud, Jung argues that human collective unconsciousness shares common traits across all people since it's collective. This collective archetype also assumes a religious nature, embracing ancient human beliefs and myths, which, despite appearing in different religious forms, fundamentally remain the same" (Ibid., 40).

Fuga writes that Jung's variant represents a regression from Freudian theories, delving deeper into idealism, metaphysics, and mysticism. According to Fuga, Jung's theories defend religion, treating dogmas and religious beliefs as inherent and coexisting with humans from birth to death. He criticizes Jung for presenting religion as a form of psychotherapy, portraying it as a therapy that serves the oppressor and slave-owner, by subduing the oppressed and encouraging acceptance of the slave condition as a natural state of human relations (Ibid., 42).

This return to religion within Neo-Freudianism, as part of an undivided idealistic philosophy, is seen by Fuga as a deliberate move to attack materialist, Marxist-Leninist philosophy and progressive cultures worldwide. Its purpose, he argues, is to convince the working masses that they can never liberate themselves or overthrow religious dogmas that sustain the capitalist order of oppression and exploitation (Ibid., 49). Drawing on Marxist-Leninist ideology and Enver Hoxha's speeches, Fuga critiques Jung's concept of the archetype by challenging

Jung's idea that these archetypes originate with humanity and evolve alongside it.

"...The collective religious archetype, according to Jung, passed down from generation to generation, contradicts the fact that many past dogmas are no longer believed in today's society. In the case of the youth in socialist Albania, they do not subscribe to any religious dogmas or beliefs" (Ibid., 58).

The third part of the book focuses on Erich Fromm, whom Fuga regards as the most important representative of Neo-Freudianism of the time. Fromm sought to adapt Freudianism to the social conditions of the post-1960s era. Neo-Freudianism, according to Fuga, serves bourgeois philosophy not only by strategically serving its interests but also by tactically adapting to changes within the bourgeois order.

"...Following World War II, the bourgeois order was no longer interested in Freudian theories' social pessimism; instead, it needed a philosophy that promoted the optimism of life and the well-being achieved under capitalism. Fromm accomplished this with his Neo-Freudian theories," (Ibid., 67).

Fuga examines Fromm's attempt to synthesize Marxism and Freudianism, observing a shift away from Freud's emphasis on biological determinants toward a focus on social influences. Fromm acknowledges the presence of human contradictions within both the conscious and unconscious realms, thereby affirming Freud's philosophical insights. However, according to Fuga, Fromm claims the discrepancy lies in methodology: like other Neo-Freudians, Fromm adapts Freudianism to suit contextual needs while upholding its foundational philosophical underpinnings (Ibid., 68-70).

Fromm's attempt to merge Marxism with Freudianism is futile, as in his work "The Concept of Man According to Marx," Fromm misinterprets Marxist philosophy:

"...While striving to separate ideology from social psychology, Fromm openly admits his Freudian influences. He claims that social psychology is more influenced by subconscious impulses than conscious aspects of rational human life. While in his conscious activities such as art, literature, philosophy, and politics, he feels liberated, in his subconscious, he comprehends the absence of freedom. Thus, he believes ideology, understood as the entirety of superstructure production and institutional creations, is illusory, while psychology comprehends the core of human problems," (Ibid., 78).

The final part of the book addresses the influence of Neo-Freudianism on contemporary arts and culture. According to Marxist thought, such influence is detrimental to art, which ought to serve to foster political and class consciousness among the masses. Any form of art that exists outside class consciousness is regarded by Fuga as decadent (Ibid., 95-97).

Beyond this, he argues that Neo-Freudianism has negatively impacted art not only in terms of content but also in form. Its emphasis on drawing inspiration from the unconscious, and on conceiving art merely as the product of emotions rather than of technique and rational thought, has, in his view, diminished the quality of contemporary art in comparison with classical art (Ibid., 100-102).

A Critique of Neo-Freudianism's Criticism

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, Artan Fuga belongs to a new generation of philosophy scholars in socialist Albania. Along with his colleagues, he pursued his studies in the Department of Philosophy at the Faculty of Political and Legal Sciences in the mid-1970s, a highly selective programme admitting only about ten students per year. This did not prevent them from engaging with Western philosophical works – labelled “bourgeois philosophy” – through their knowledge of foreign languages. Such engagement is evident in the works Fuga cites in *Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human* (Fuga, 1989). Furthermore, his familiarity with so-called bourgeois philosophers, in this case Freud, Carl Jung and Erich Fromm, is more extensive, in-depth, and detailed than that of Viktor Riska and Marianthi Zoto (Brisku, 2024).

Nevertheless, despite this extensive familiarity with these authors, it is noteworthy that even in 1989, when his book was published, Fuga's critiques of Freud and the Neo-Freudians remained fundamentally similar to those written by Riska and Zoto fifteen years earlier, following the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania – the most repressive period for literature, arts, and culture in socialist Albania. This is not to suggest that by 1989 the level of state repression, or the prevailing social and cultural constraints, remained unchanged. However, as I have argued earlier, ideological dogmatism – at least in terms of rhetoric concerning the defence of Marxism-Leninism on a global scale – remained a persistent characteristic of the socialist regime in Albania until its end in 1991.

Since the previous article analysing “Neo-Freudianism: One of the Theoretical Bases of Bourgeois Liberalism” by Viktor Riska and Marianthi Zoto already provided a detailed critique of their arguments against Freud’s, it is unnecessary to conduct a similar analysis of Fuga’s work here (Brisku, 2024). What is worth mentioning is that, Fuga’s approach closely aligns with that of Riska and Zoto, whose own critiques bear the influence of Soviet authors such as Dmitry Fedotov and Valentin Voloshinov.

In *Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human*, Fuga leaves no space for any form of “theoretical collaboration” between Marxism and either Freudianism or Neo-Freudianism – whether to highlight their common aspects or to construct a “revolutionary theory,” which, according to the official discourse of socialist Albania, should have been the ultimate goal of philosophy. This notion aligns with Marx’s Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach: “Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it,” (Marx & Engels, 1968). The rejection of Freudianism or Neo-Freudianism, as well as any attempt at a theoretical synthesis between it and Marxism, stemmed from the ideological dogmatism of Albania’s political line, which regarded any critique or deviation from Marxism-Leninism as an act of “ideological betrayal.”

The second author, after Freud, with whom Fuga engages and whom he considers a disciple of Freud in terms of his theories, is Carl Jung. According to Fuga, with his concept of the collective archetype – as irrational forces shared by a society – Jung goes even further than Freud in the direction of idealist philosophy, ultimately justifying religion and mysticism. What Fuga overlooks is that the collective religious archetype doesn’t imply that all human societies share the same religious beliefs and myths but rather that the sense of religious belief exists within all human societies. The Albanian example of eradicating religious dogmas during socialism, when religious belief was legally prohibited yet practiced by individuals despite the risk of punishment, and the revival of religious practices and beliefs post-regime collapse, possibly as a reaction to its repression, also elucidates this point.

Karl Marx’s quote, “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people,” used to situate class relations within religion, signifies the existence of religious beliefs in all societies founded on exploitation, providing some sort of solace in a repressive society (Marx, 1970: 63). Moreover, even in a Stalinist society like Albania,

where religion was legally banned, it was replaced by the cult of the leader's personality and Party cult. This kind of personality cult had its liturgy and rituals, publicly performed through parades and iconography of the Stalinist leader, in Albania's case, Enver Hoxha (Dani, 2023).

Jung's theories stand in sharp philosophical contrast to Marxism. Marxism focuses on societal structures, economics, and class conflicts, rooted in materialism and emphasizing tangible, communal factors. Conversely, Jung delves inward, exploring the individual mind, emphasizing subjective experiences, symbols, and personal development. While Marx envisions a classless society, communal ownership, and shared prosperity, Jung guides individuals toward inner integration and self-realization. Their views on religion diverge, with Marx critiquing it as a tool for societal control, while Jung acknowledges the importance of religious symbols in shaping human psychology (Gerber, 2021: 3-4).

Therefore, it can be argued that Fuga's criticism of Jung is valid from a Marxist perspective. Compared to other Neo-Freudian authors who critique Freud for neglecting cultural, economic, and social contexts, Jung criticizes Freud for his "materialism", and so Fuga does observe that Jung's philosophy leans more towards idealism than Freud's. The problem arises when Fuga attempts to understand the purpose of Jung's move towards idealism, which, according to Fuga, "serves bourgeois interests and undermines Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movements," (Fuga, 1989: 36). He therefore concludes that such theories are reactionary, serving bourgeois interests. Another problem with Fuga's argument is that for him, Jung's inclination towards idealism, as well as Fromm's towards materialism, represent different sides of the same coin, the interests of the bourgeoisie (Ibid., 12). This reasoning reflects more the orthodox propaganda of socialist Albania's ideology than a Materialist critique of Jung.

Another contradiction in Fuga's argument emerges in the first part of the book, where he traces the evolution of Neo-Freudian theories to the discrediting of Freud by Marxism-Leninism. This discrediting highlighted the fundamentally unscientific nature of Freudianism, which focused solely on instincts and the unconscious as guides to human life and activity, classifying it as idealist philosophy (Ibid., 14). For this reason, the bourgeoisie needed new theories that, while acknowledging the role of some economic and social factors in shaping humans, essentially retained the core of Freudianism. The contradiction lies in the fact that if the bourgeoisie required Neo-Freudian theories to

depart from Freud's idealism, it should have not also encouraged and promoted Jung's theories, which are as idealist as Freud's, if not more so.

As previously noted, Marx and Jung present distinctly different theories. However, in exploring these contrasting theories, Julien-François Gerber offers a compelling reconciliation. He highlights their shared concerns for human well-being and liberation, noting points of convergence between Marxism and Jungian thought that hint at their potential integration for a deeper understanding. Gerber argues that synthesizing their approaches could foster genuine emancipation. He underscores the unique contributions of the Jungian viewpoint, including its emphasis on the soul, its positive engagement with the unconscious and spirituality, and a Jungian-Marxian anthropology that explores social struggles, ideology, archetypes, and the impact of capitalism (Gerber, 2021: 1-2).

Gerber also delves into “degrowth” – a movement aimed at reducing unnecessary economic activity and reshaping societies to promote human and nonhuman well-being. He suggests that degrowth aligns with the proposed Jungian-Marxian synthesis, advocating for a radical reorganization based on sustainable, egalitarian “human economies” (Ibid., 14-15).

When Artan Fuga wrote *Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human*, Julien-François Gerber had not yet attempted to offer a synthesis between Marx's and Jung's ideas. Fuga, therefore, cannot be “accused” of failing to integrate Gerber's ideas into his work.

Furthermore, in a country like Albania, where the official ideology prioritized perpetual economic progress and growth, primarily defined through the development of heavy and mining industries, the concept of “degrowth”, which Gerber proposes as a Jungian-Marxian synthesis, would have been foreign. That said, there may have been limited points of potential alignment. During the 1980s, the Albanian leadership became aware of environmental damage caused by its industries and occasionally acknowledged it as a problem, though financial constraints prevented substantial improvements. While this does not indicate that Albanian Marxist-Leninism tended toward “degrowth”, it suggests that, in a more open intellectual and political environment, Albanian theorists might have found common ground between the official ideology and the views of the authors they were tasked with critiquing.

Fuga highlights Fromm's underlying "anti-Marxist stance". While Fromm attempts a synthesis, Fuga discerns an anti-Marxist sentiment in his core beliefs. He emphasizes the significance of Marxist-Leninist ideology not only in politics or economics but also in literature, as a means of unveiling the oppression of the working class. Such revelations, Fuga contends, have historically sparked revolutionary movements, much like Marx's own interventions. By contrast, he notes that socialist Albanian society sustained a widespread belief, both ideological and psychological, that individuals possess the capacity to attain complete freedom (Fuga, 1989: 80).

Fuga links Fromm's work, and the Neo-Freudian attempt to merge Marxism with Freudianism, to the rise of revisionism in the Soviet Union and other socialist nations. This revisionist trend pursued a peaceful coexistence between opposing ideologies and a compromise between capital and labour – an approach that distorted the core tenets of Marxism-Leninism. As the Soviet Union embraced this reconciliatory approach, Albania, a staunch advocate of Marxism-Leninism, found itself at odds with this stance. Neo-Freudianism, therefore, was seen as a direct assault on socialist Albania as well (Ibid., 72).

Another significant aspect of Fuga's critique of Fromm concerns the latter's adaptation of the psychoanalytic concept of "transference" to society. Fuga argues that this leads to a submissive attitude of the proletariat and the underprivileged classes, whose only recourse under such oppression is to worship their oppressors. Moreover, Fromm goes as far as to say that ordinary people do not desire freedom, implying that the capitalist classes maintain power not through inherent class-based oppressive relationships but because the oppressed wish to remain in subjugation (Ibid., 95).

The criticisms levied by Fuga against Erich Fromm bear similarities to those previously articulated by Riska and Zoto, who, in their work, seemed to misunderstand, or more accurately, to distort Marxism in their attempt to reconcile it with Freudianism (Brisku, 2024).

Certainly, an analysis of Fromm's work reveals that, alongside from his criticisms of Freud for overemphasizing the individual and neglecting the social and economic dimensions of psychological problems, Fromm also critiques Marx. He argued that Marx's theory was lacking in adequate psychological insight, and that Marx's heavy preoccupation with the economic aspects of capitalism prevented him from paying sufficient attention to the passions and strivings which are rooted in man's nature. Fromm also believed that Marx's theory did not

provide a convincing remedy for the ills of capitalism, as it did not explain how the economic basis of society comes to be translated into the ideological superstructure. Finally, Fromm argued that Marx's theory did not adequately address the issue of individual freedom, as it focused primarily on the collective struggle of the working class against the ruling class (Cheliotis, 2011: 450-52). Nevertheless, this does not mean that his intention was to discredit Marxism in favor of Freudianism; rather, the objective was to perceive both theories as complementary frameworks for analyzing the ramifications of capitalism. While Marxism offers insights on a systemic level, Freudianism provides a lens through which to examine its effects on the individual scale.

Conclusions

This article aimed to analyse a work on Neo-Freudianism through the lens of Albanian Marxist-Leninist philosophy. The primary focus was the book *Neofrojdzmi: filozofi e njeriut të tjetërsuar* [Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human] (1989) by Artan Fuga, a renowned Albanian philosopher both within and outside the country. The article builds on a previous study that similarly examined perspectives on Freudianism and Neo-Freudianism in socialist Albania, focusing on the book "Neo-Freudianism: One of the Theoretical Bases of Bourgeois Liberalism" (1974) by Viktor Riska and Marianthi Zoto.

Although these works address similar themes, the historical context and the individuals writing them differ significantly. The year 1974 marked one of the most repressive periods in the history of Albanian socialism, particularly in literature, philosophy, arts, and culture. This ideological rigidity also resulted in purges at all levels of cultural and intellectual institutions. In this context, the dogmatism of Riska and Zoto's work is understandable.

By contrast, the year 1989, when *Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human* was published, represented a significantly different political and social climate in Albania. Since the conclusion of internal Party purges in 1983, and particularly after the death of Enver Hoxha in 1985 – who had ruled the country for forty years – the overall political and social environment had softened, and state repression had somewhat diminished. However, as the analysis of Fuga's book demonstrates, this political shift did not translate into a relaxation of dogmatism within Albanian Marxism-Leninism. Despite a deeper engagement with and analysis of Sigmund Freud and Neo-Freudian au-

thors such as Carl Jung and Erich Fromm, Fuga's approach and criticisms largely remained aligned with those of Riska and Zoto. These, in turn, reflected the positions of Soviet critics of Freud. This dogmatism evident in *Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human*, prevents Fuga from identifying any common ground or theoretical synthesis between Marxism and Freudianism or its Neo-Freudian variants.

As mentioned, following the fall of socialism, Artan Fuga emerged as the most prominent Albanian philosopher. He has authored numerous philosophical works and articles, demonstrating a clear departure from the dogmatism of Orthodox Marxism. Nonetheless, to my knowledge, he has not written any self-critical reflections on the works he produced during the period of state socialism in Albania – perhaps assuming it is self-evident that those writings were produced under the dictates of a repressive regime. In a personal interview, however, Fuga has acknowledged that he studied during a highly dogmatic era in Albania with regard to philosophy and the humanities. According to him, this also explains why, in his late thirties when he already had a Candidate of Sciences degree² in Albania, he went to France after 1991 to pursue postgraduate studies in philosophy. He considers himself, in his own words, a “lifelong student” (Fuga, 2015).

Additionally, this article aimed to provide a critique of Fuga's criticisms of Freud and the Neo-Freudians Jung and Fromm. To do so, it draws upon Western scholars associated with Marxism, many of whom share similar critiques of psychoanalysis as Fuga. However, many of these thinkers converge on the argument that while Marxism seeks social liberation, Freudianism seeks individual liberation, and a synthesis between the two is not merely a theoretical exercise but can serve as the foundation for a revolutionary theory capable of driving radical social change.

Such a synthesis, however, was strictly rejected by Orthodox Marxism. In *Neo-Freudianism: The Philosophy of the Alienated Human*, any attempt at theoretical integration between Marxism and psychoanalysis is regarded as a “betrayal” of Marxism – not only as a philosophical tradition but, more importantly, as a revolutionary theory. As a result, Neo-Freudian authors such as Erich Fromm – who explicitly sought to synthesize Marxist and Freudian thought, viewing them as

²According to the system of education and scientific degrees established in the USSR – and subsequently adopted in most countries of the so-called Socialist Camp – the Candidate of Sciences degree was considered equivalent to the international PhD.

complementary frameworks for analysing the effects of capitalism – are criticized and ultimately dismissed.

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